NewsBank
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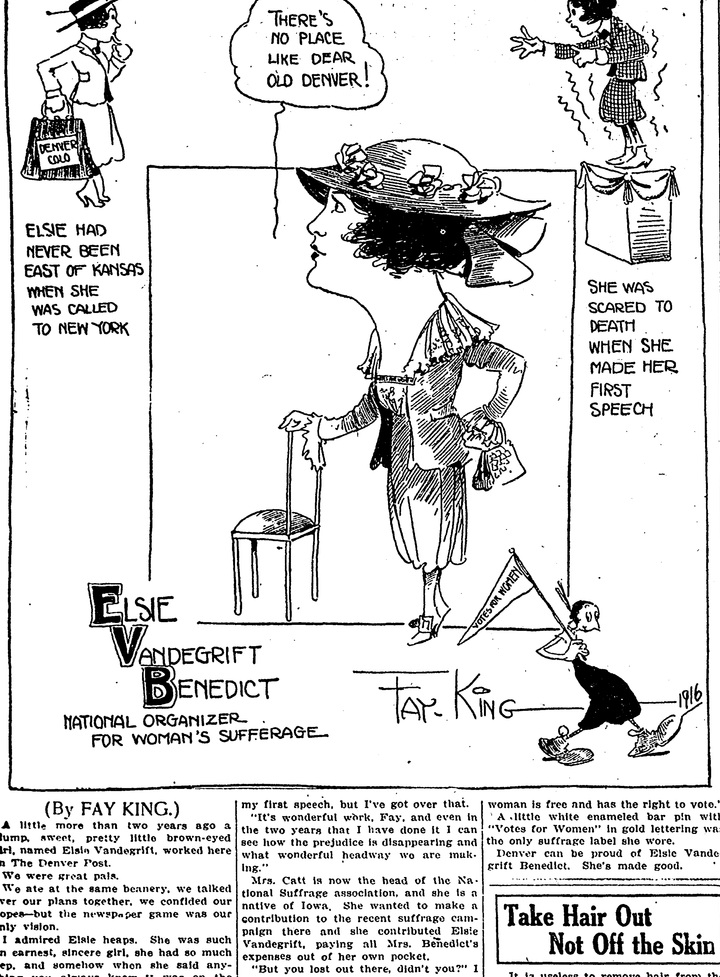
# COLORADO GIRL MAKING GOOD AS WORKER IN SUFFRAGE CAUSE




(By FAY KING.)

A little more than two years ago a plump, sweet, pretty little brown-eyed girl, named Elsie Vandegrift, worked here on The Denver Post.

We were great pals.

We ate at the same beanery, we talked over our plans together, we confided our hopes—but the newspaper game was our only vision.

I admired Elsie heaps. She was such an earnest, sincere girl, she had so much pep, and somehow when she said anything you always knew it was on the level.

But one day a surprise came. Elsie Vandegrift's opportunity was knocking at her door.

Carrie Chapman Catt, the famous suffragette of New York City, had written Mary C. C. Bradford to recommend to her some bright, alert, capable Colorado woman that could come to New York, tell the New Yorkers about what suffrage had accomplished and done in Colorado, where it has been in effect for twenty years.

Now, Colorado is just teeming with splendid women of that type, but of all these women Mary C. C. Bradford believed that little Elsie Vandegrift, young and enthusiastic, experienced only in the debating and speech-making she had done at the University of Denver and the University of Colorado, would be the best, and Mary C. C. Bradford recommended her.

**MRS. CATT MAKES HER A WONDERFUL OFFER.**

Mrs. Catt, abiding by Mrs. Bradford's decision, wired Elsie Vandegrift, and we nearly fell deal at the wonderful salary that was offered. But Elsie Vandegrift refused the offer.

Now, when a woman refuses a wonderful offer like that there can only be one real reason—yes! You've guessed it. Elsie was engaged.

But her young man, tho he loved Elsie with all his heart, realized her big opportunity, and, being a great believer in woman's suffrage, he told her he would wait for her, and persuaded her to answer the great call that had come.

Every one persuaded Elsie until she realized that she had been chosen from the multitude to do a great work, and she decided, after four weeks of deliberation, to accept the offer.

Everybody was pleased but me.

I loved Elsie, and I had visions of a great change coming over her. I was afraid her soft, nice voice would grow harsh and raspy. I was afraid she'd slick her brown curls back, and I was afraid she'd wear mannish things, and—I just couldn't bear to see her go.

But that's been over two years ago.

Yesterday I saw her again for the first time since, altho from letters I had learned that she had come back to Colorado, after a year in New York, to marry Ralph Benedict, and after a brief honeymoon had returned to her work.

But say, it never spoiled her at all. If anything, she's better looking, and she's got the cutest hats and the niftiest clothes!

**THERE'S STILL NO PLACE LIKE DENVER TO HER.**

"Gee! There's no place like dear old Denver after all," was the first thing she said.

"Tell me all about it—all about the wonderful things you've been doing—I'm dying to hear," I begged.

"I've done nothing wonderful," was her modest reply. "Just lots of little things that I hope have helped.

"I sure was the greenest thing when I hit New York. Never had been east of the middle of Kansas. Mrs. Catt had wired me to come directly to her home, but later she discovered she would be out of town, so she told me to go to the Martha Washington hotel. I thought that would be a gorgeous place, but say, it's just a great big overgrown Y. W. C. A. Nothing but women there, girl bell hops, not a man allowed above the first floor. Some of those women have fifteen-year leases on their rooms and they wear velvet gowns of 1850 vintage todinner. And say, I'd never seen an artichoke until I got to New York either, and I was trying to eat it with a fork! You can imagine how embarrassed I was when I saw the others eat them with their fingers!

"Oh, yes, I was scared when I made my first speech, but I've got over that.

"It's wonderful work, Fay, and even in the two years that I have done it I can see how the prejudice is disappearing and what wonderful headway we are making."

Mrs. Catt is now the head of the National Suffrage association, and she is a native of Iowa. She wanted to make a contribution to the recent suffrage campaign there and she contributed Elsie Vandegrift, paying all Mrs. Benedict's expenses out of her own pocket.

"But you lost out there, didn't you?" I asked.

"Not defeated; just delayed. It's got to come, you know."

Mr. Benedict lives here. Just now Elsie has a vacation. At first she was to have a whole month's vacation, but Mrs. Catt wired her that she had better take only two weeks because the suffrage campaigners in South Dakota are awaiting her arrival before they start anything, and a month's vacation would delay them too long.

She had planned to lead the Colorado delegation in the big suffrage parade that is marching in Chicago today, but changed her plans because she needs this little rest so badly.

"There is only one drawback to my great love for my work," she said, "and that is being away from Ralph. We've been married more than a year and have only been together about four months of that time. My love for him is the one thing that sometimes makes me think of giving up my work, and yet I don't feel I want to make a home until every woman is free and has the right to vote."

A little white enameled bar pin with "Votes for Women" in gold lettering was the only suffrage label she wore.

Denver can be proud of Elsie Vandegrift Benedict. She's made good.

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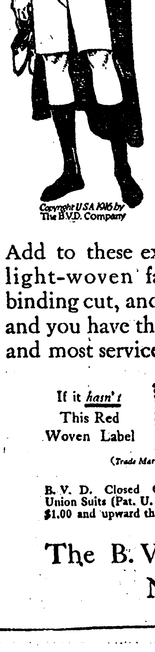


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